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Farm Mobilization FACT SHEET

No.2-- Farm Machinery Conservation

July 1951

FARMERS CALLED UPON TO CONSERVE FARM MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT

In the Nation's present mobilization effort, some of the most essential production machinery is on farms. To meet defense needs for agricultural products, farmers will need to get the most out of their farm machinery and equipment. Thus, keeping farm machinery in good repair, cutting down on wear in operation, and sharing in its use comprise one of the farmer's most important mobilization jobs.

MACHINERY CONSERVATION BENEFITS THE FARMER

Conserving both machinery and parts now on hand is a thrifty measure for any farmer with an eye on his account book--and one that will help assure having the right machinery for the job when it is needed for best results. Waste and lost production can result when a farm job is not done at the right time or season.

Farmers and the Nation as a whole also are benefitted when conservation of present machinery channels raw materials into needed new machinery and equipment for agriculture. Every month or year the farmer adds to the operating life of his tractor or the cutter bar on his mower saves steel and other materials for making new equipment.

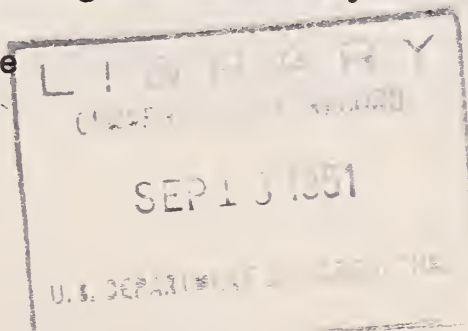
FARMERS 'DID IT BEFORE' -- THEY CAN 'DO IT AGAIN'

The present need is for the same careful maintenance and efficient use farmers gave machinery during World War II. Some pointers for farmers:

1. Good management--keeping machinery ready ahead of time to do each job-- results from periodic and systematic inspection of all equipment. This includes not only visual inspection, but actual operation of all working parts. A good rule: Test machinery before putting it into use. Better still, check need for repair parts when putting machines away at the end of the season.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

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2. Anticipating common replacement needs and having repair parts on hand---

An adequate farm shop, well stocked with spare parts for replacing worn or broken machine parts or making common repairs, provides the means of saving critical time. Arranging with machinery dealers for major repairs well ahead of the time the machine will be needed on the farm is equally important.

3. Adjustment of parts for maximum efficiency and the least wear and breakage---

All moving parts of farm machines must be properly adjusted for maximum efficiency of operation, and for least wear. Systematically following the course of power through clutches, ratchets, gears, shafts, sprockets, V-belts, and chains, allows the operator to determine if equipment is working properly. Tight and serviceable nuts, screws, and cotter pins help maintain machines at peak performance.

4. Regular servicing--checking and lubrication--Oiling, greasing, painting and cleaning prevents rust, corrosion, and unnecessary wear. The right grade of clean lubricant applied at the right time increases machinery life and usefulness. Regular cleaning and proper lubricating is especially important for electric motors.

5. Skilled handling in operation for maximum efficiency and the least wear and breakage--Skilled conservative handling of farm machines prolongs their life. The experienced operator knows the capabilities of his equipment and uses it to do the most efficient job.

6. Protection from weather or other damage when not in use--Sheltering machinery from the weather and keeping it properly conditioned when not in use prevents unnecessary deterioration and provides assurance that equipment is ready for use at all times. Tagging machine parts needing repair at time of storage facilitates getting these repairs made during slack seasons.

7. Attention to safety in operation--Safe operation of farm machinery depends on the operator's knowledge of the machine and his conscious regard of it as a potential danger hazard. Skilled farm manpower is at a premium in this period of defense mobilization, and a methodical check to see that all power take-off shields and guards for moving parts are in place will prevent injury and provide greater production of food and fiber.

8. Sharing among neighbors--Exchange of machine work among owners can frequently save time and money and extend the effective use of farm equipment.

BACKGROUND

FARM MACHINERY IMPORTANT IN MOBILIZATION EFFORT

Farmers have been called upon to boost this year's agricultural output over that of any previous year. Yet virtually no additional land can be brought into production. Manpower may be scarcer than before. One of the key ways to increase agriculture's productive capacity is through continued and expanded mechanization and electrification of our farms.

What machinery and electric power can do to achieve this increased productivity has been amply proved during World War II and since. With fewer workers on farms, agriculture has enlarged its yearly production by 40 percent since 1935-39. Machinery did not do the job alone. Also contributing to higher crop yields have been the use of more fertilizer and lime, better seed, and better cropping practices. But mechanization and electricity have been major factors in replacing dwindling manpower in agriculture.

In the past 10 years, farmers have stepped up sharply their shift from human and animal to mechanical power. There are more than twice as many tractors on farms today as in 1941, and the use of such labor-saving machines as grain combines, mechanical corn pickers, and milking machines has been tripled.

With this reservoir of mechanical power, American agriculture is in better shape for its production job than it was at the beginning of World War II. But just as machinery makes farmers better equipped for high-g geared production, farmers are more dependent on machinery. Without machinery, many farmers could not operate. And without adequate new machines and parts, food and fiber production would assuredly slow down.

Farm machinery and equipment take on added importance in view of the farm manpower situation. There were some 8 million in the ranks of the unemployed when we shifted into war production during the early 1940's, but nearly every one who wants a job has one today. Although every effort is being made to keep key farm workers on farms, industry and the armed forces already are drawing substantially from the farm labor force. More and better use of mechanized equipment can help fill this gap on the Nation's farms.

NEW FARM MACHINERY PRODUCTION—WHAT'S BEING DONE ABOUT IT ?

To keep farm machinery and equipment rolling off manufacturers' assembly lines, certain raw materials are essential, especially steel. Strategic materials must be made available for munitions and other defense supplies and the balance divided among various industries on the basis of their importance to the mobilization effort. Within the Federal Government's authority to allocate materials, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is claimant agency for agriculture.

In assessing agriculture's needs for new equipment in 1951, the Department has seen these requirements falling into three classes: (1) the amount required to replace worn-out and obsolete equipment, (2) machinery to accomplish production shifts and increases that are necessary to bring overall farm production in line with this year's special defense needs for food and fiber, and (3) machinery required to compensate for the continuing reduction in the farm labor force. The Department has recommended that production of machinery and repair parts be adequate to meet these requirements.

The Department has taken every opportunity to make these farm equipment needs known and generally understood. As claimant agent, Secretary Charles F. Brannan last October transmitted to the Secretary of Commerce the USDA's

estimate of machinery requirements. To further ascertain the coming requirements of farmers for new equipment and repair parts, the Department has requested local surveys by county PMA farmer-committees.

PRODUCTION PICTURE FOR NEW FARM MACHINERY UNCERTAIN

The year 1951 got off to a fairly good start for the farm machinery industry. However, there has been a gradual tapering off of this supply, which has inevitably brought about a decrease in the production of mechanized equipment for farmers.

Issuance of priority ratings to the farm equipment industry by National Production Authority prevented a serious decline in the production of farm equipment. The new controlled-materials plan provides for a long-range program for the allocation of critical materials. Under the plan, farm machinery manufacturers are to receive firm allocations of materials which will assure production of this vital equipment. But the levels of this production have not yet been definitely determined.

Meanwhile, the tightest situation in strategic materials may be yet to come as industrial defense production builds up to peak levels.

THE INFORMATION PROGRAM

Publication of this fact sheet initiates an information program so that farmers may be fully informed about the importance of machinery conservation to farm production. Distribution of the fact sheet through various USDA agencies at State and county levels will be supplemented by other activities listed below:

1. Press—U.S.D.A. press releases prepared at appropriate times calling attention to phases of the 8-point program for machinery conservation.
2. Farm papers and magazines—Distribution of fact sheet through U.S.D.A. weekly letter to farm papers and magazines.
3. Radio—
 - a. Distribution of fact sheet to radio farm program directors.
 - b. National radio network shows from Washington.
4. Trade association journals—Distribution of fact sheet to trade association journals on U.S.D.A.'s press release list.
5. Advertisers—
 - a. Distribution of fact sheet to advertisers in agricultural field.
 - b. Special notification to the Advertising Council.